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Nadal, Beatriz Gomes

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Culture, school organization and pedagogical coordination: areas of intersection

Beatriz Gomes Nadal

Departamento de Pedagogia, Universidade Estadual de Ponta Grossa, Praça Santos Andrade, 1, 84010-330, Ponta Grossa, Paraná, Brasil.
E-mail: beatrizgnadal@gmail.com

ABSTRACT. The research problematized the existing culture in the work of pedagogical coordinators who work in public schools. The objectives are to point out notions about the cultural dynamics associating it with the professional culture of the pedagogues; to know the characteristics of the work developed by the pedagogues and also contribute to the processes of professional reflection of pedagogues who act in the school management / coordination. It is developed from the perspective qualitative approach of the interpretative type. It shows that schools share values linked to bureaucracy, even if it presents itself in a frank dysfunction, and it means resistance or attempt to overcome it in the face of an organization lacking a new rationality. As for the pedagogical coordination of these organizations, we infer that the work that is most evident is coordinating the inconsistencies of the existing bureaucracy, although the political-democratic coordination of collective human effort has not been fully revealed through continuous, reflexive and collaborative in school.

Keywords: school; school culture; school management; coordination of pedagogical work.

Cultura, organização escolar e coordenação pedagógica: espaços de interseção

RESUMO. A pesquisa problematizou a cultura existente no trabalho de coordenadores pedagógicos que atuam em escolas públicas. Teve como objetivos apontar noções sobre a dinâmica cultural associando-a à cultura profissional dos coordenadores; conhecer as características do trabalho por eles desenvolvido no interior das escolas públicas; e ainda contribuir para os processos de reflexão profissional de coordenadores pedagógicos que atuam na gestão/coordenação escolar. Desenvolveu-se na perspectiva qualitativa de tipo interpretativo. Revelou que as escolas partilham de valores ligados à burocracia, embora esta se apresente em franca disfunção, podendo significar resistência ou tentativa de superação frente a uma organização carente de uma nova racionalidade. Quanto à coordenação pedagógica de tais organizações, inferimos que o trabalho que mais se evidencia é o da coordenação das inconsistências da burocracia existente, ainda não tendo se revelado de forma plena a coordenação político-democrática do esforço humano coletivo por meio da formação continuada, reflexiva e colaborativa na escola.

Palavras-chave: escola; cultura escolar; administração escolar; coordenação do trabalho pedagógico.

Cultura, organización escolar y coordinación pedagógica: espacios de intersección

RESUMEN. La pesquisa problematizó la cultura existente en el trabajo de coordinadores pedagógicos que actúan en escuelas públicas. Tuvo como objetivos apuntar nociones acerca de la dinámica cultural asociando a la cultura profesional de los pedagogos; conocer las características del trabajo desarrollado por los pedagogos en el interior de las escuelas públicas y, también, contribuir para los procesos de reflexión profesional de pedagogos que actúan en la gestión/coordenación escolar. Se desarrolla en la perspectiva cualitativa del tipo interpretativo. Reveló que las escuelas comparten valores relacionados a la burocracia, aunque esta se presente en franca disfunción, pudiendo significar resistencia o tentativa de superación frente a una organización carente de una nueva racionalidad. Cuanto a la coordinación pedagógica de estas organizaciones, inferimos que el trabajo que más se evidencia es el de la coordinación de las inconsistencias de la burocracia existente, aun no teniendo se revelado de forma plena la coordinación político-democrática del esfuerzo humano colectivo por medio de la formación continua, reflexiva y colaborativa en la escuela.

Palabras-clave: escuela; cultura escolar; administración escolar; coordinación del trabajo pedagógico.

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Introducing the question: school culture¹

Culture is an inherent factor in institutions, a set of meanings, beliefs, values, ritualized forms of realizing the work that is produced from the human capacity to feel their experience in the world, giving it meanings that are shared in a group or community. In school institutions, culture strongly influences the way people understand the role of education and organize for, relate to, and work. Understanding schools thus requires capturing them in their own dynamics, in their culture, which is a “[...] system of meanings whereby necessarily (although among other means) a given social order is communicated, reproduced, lived and studied” (Williams, 1992, p. 13).

Culture, thus, is based on a selective process: tradition. Of all lived experiences (senses, values, customs, meanings, rituals, artifacts), a part is selected to be perpetuated, composing an experience in dominance or a hegemonic experience. Institutions are the ones that uphold tradition when they are in charge of imparting basic teachings for life in society, values and practices intentionally selected to socialize and add new members.

For Williams (1979), tradition is a version of the past that must be linked to the present to ratify it, offering a sense of continuity that, in the course of lived experiences, constitutes a hegemonic or dominant view of how to feel reality. It is important to realize, however, that while it is instituted or dominant, tradition competes with counter-hegemonies because the subjects who experience the former respond to it in different² ways, which is the reason that, even if dominant, a cultural tradition will never be unique and can be transformed or surpassed.

The vulnerability of tradition occurs because of opposing hegemonies that occur when previously neglected experiences are recovered, reinterpreted and rearticulated to current institutional practices, or when subjects who have new positions in common group together and oppose current logic.

In this way, culture acts both in the constitution and in the transformation of institutions: it is an instituted, constitutive and also instituting and transforming force, and can become an instrument of domination and maintenance or of change. It is, at the same time, a socialization framework that signals socially accepted ways to deal with situations and problems, as well as a space for struggles between opposites who feel and experience reality differently.

In school dynamics, it is possible to recognize hegemonic pedagogical traditions, instituted as products of historical school experience, as well as reaction movements to this universe, instituting hegemonies that emerge from the meanings shared by groups of the school community in their concrete experience in the institution. The school can be understood, therefore, through the school culture, this

[...] set of theories, ideas, principles, norms, guidelines, rituals, inertia, habits and practices (ways of doing and thinking, mentalities and behaviors) established over time in the form of traditions, regularities and rules of the game not questioned and shared by their authors, within the educational institutions.

[...] traditions, regularities and rules of play transmitted from generation to generation and which provide strategies: (a) to integrate into and interact with particular institutions; b) to perform, above all in class, the daily tasks that are expected of each one, and to face the demands and limitations that these tasks imply or entail; and c) to survive the successive reforms by reinterpreting and adapting them to their culture, context, and needs (Viñao Frago, 2005, p. 59)³.

Being produced from its material experience, the school culture is not unique. It is influenced by the educational purposes pursued by the institution and the type of work it performs, that is, it is directly associated with the pedagogical work (central experience of the school), its nature, characteristics and pressures imposed on teachers.

In this perspective, we developed the research that turned to the study of the culture of pedagogical coordination within the school organization. The coordinator was chosen for its centrality in the process of organizing the school unit and its proximity to the teachers, protagonists of the educational task.

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²According to Williams, on the basis of the breaking or overcoming of tradition and the generation of alternative hegemonies are the structures of feeling and experience: “[...] meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between them and formal or systematic beliefs are in practice variable (including historically variable) in relation to various aspects, ranging from assent between interpreted and selected beliefs, and lived and justified experiences” (Williams, 1979, p. 134).

³In the original, “[...] conjunto de teorías, ideas, principios, normas, pautas, rituales, inercias, hábitos y prácticas (formas de hacer y pensar, mentalidades y comportamientos) sedimentadas a lo largo del tiempo en forma de tradiciones, regularidades y reglas de juego no puestas en entredicho y compartidas por sus actores, en el seno de las instituciones educativas.

[...] tradiciones, regularidades y reglas de juego que se transmiten de generación en generación y que proporcionan estrategias: a) para integrarse en dichas instituciones e interactuar en las mismas; b) para llevar a cabo, sobre todo en el aula, las tareas cotidianas que de cada uno se esperan, y hacer frente a las exigencias y limitaciones que dichas tareas implican o conllevan; y c) para sobrevivir a las sucesivas reformas, reinterpretándolas y adaptándolas, desde dicha cultura, a su contexto y necesidades (Viñao Frago, 2005, p. 59).

The research problematized the existing culture in the work of educators working in the management of public elementary schools (second segment) and/or high school and aimed to point out notions about cultural dynamics (form of constitution, tradition and disruption) associating them with the professional culture of the coordinators; to learn the characteristics of their work in public schools; and to contribute to the professional reflection processes of pedagogical coordinators working in school management.

The nature of the problem and the objectives we set ourselves pointed to the work in the qualitative perspective of interpretative type. GimenoSacristán and Pérez Gomez (1998) argue in favor of interpretive research when they claim that

The subject's behaviors, his learning processes and the peculiarities of his development can only be understood if we are able to understand the meanings that are created in his exchanges with physical and social reality throughout his singular biography. From this perspective, man is an animal suspended in networks of meanings that, to a large extent, he himself contributed to the weaving (Sacristán & Gomez, 1998, p. 103).

In this methodology, the approach of the researcher to reality must be done without pre-fixed frames of analysis, exposing him- or herself to capture and understand the significances and meanings that emerge from the investigated field.

The research involved bibliographic study and field research developed using questionnaires organized with open questions. Pedagogical coordinators (pedagogues) were selected from the effective staff of state schools in the municipality of Ponta Grossa, with professional practice time between 1 and 3 years. This criterion was adopted in order to select subjects who, because they are in the phase of professional initiation, would, in theory, be more exposed to the movement of "cooptation" by the cultural tradition of schools. The instruments were sent electronically to 41 educators, 12 of whom replied.

The research subjects were named as CP1, CP2, ..., CP12, and their speech data, organized by the criterion of higher incidence around two axes; a) school organization: from the idea of collective work to the bureaucratic organization of the school, and b) school organization and culture of pedagogical coordination.

School organization: from the idea of collective work to the bureaucratic organization of school

The school is an organization and, as such, mobilizes and uses resources to achieve its institutional goals. It is understood that its purpose is the humanization of children and young people through the appropriation not only of scientific/school knowledge, but of all historically produced culture, enabling them a citizen experience, critical and transforming the unfair and unequal reality of class society. From the educational purpose of the school organization an organization arises that is capable of rationally providing and disposing of the resources necessary for such purposes to be realized.

Paro (2010; 2012) explains the organizational issue through its two main functions: the rationalization of objective and subjective resources and the coordination of collective human effort, emphasizing that the latter, although inseparable from the former, has greater complexity due to the involvement of the element admittedly intentional and political. The 'organizational question' involves the mobilization of the different subjects, from their roles in the division of labor, to remain articulated to the general purposes of the institution, performing a collective work which will only occur if there is participation. In this sense, Libâneo asserts that it is up to the teachers and other agents of the school organization to

[...] participate consciously and effectively in school organization and management practices [in] a work team in which they discuss, make decisions, and define forms of actions so that the structure and procedures of the organization and management are jointly constructed [...] (Libâneo, 2007, p. 290).

Approaching the research data, we observe that the work of the coordinators within the schools develops under the strong influence of its functioning and that this, contrary to the conception of organization as a democratic space whose work is collectively defined by the members, seeks to function impersonally and refractory to people's influence.

As I seek to observe the classroom, I realize how 'sad' is the physical structure of the room where the students are, nothing to motivate their studies; the excess of bureaucratic activities or counseling due to undisciplined behavior are so many that do not allow moments of planning within the school; the way teachers are distributed to work does not allow them to get involved in school discussions because the same teacher gives lectures in several schools, dedicating strictly the activity-hours time to each location.; [...] (CP7, emphasis in the original).

The picture presented led us to search for explanations capable of supporting the phenomenon found, so we rely on Weber (cited by Motta & Bresser-Pereira, 1988) to understand it from the phenomenon of bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy is a large social system organized extremely rationally. Rationality is considered an attribute of logic: rational is all that makes sense in the face of the need for the organization to achieve its purpose in the most appropriate way to make the least effort.

It is a form of power legitimized by the rationalization of work that exercises a legitimate dominion over its members. According to the theory of bureaucracy, there are three types of domination: that of the charismatic leader, that of traditionalism, and the rational-legal domination of the bureaucracy. We will use this typology to understand the work processes in the researched organizations.

The bureaucracy exercises great domination over the people who are organized through it. This domain finds legitimacy in three processes: a) the 'formality' (formal domain) with which the rationality established by bureaucracy is presented to members through norms; b) the 'impersonality' with which it regulates and controls the behavior of all without distinction; and c) the 'management process' of the administered thing, which is performed by professional administrators.

The 'formality' of the bureaucracy lies in its rational, legal and clearly hierarchical norms: it "[...] derives from a system of rational, written and exhaustive norms that precisely define the relations of command and subordination, distributing activities to be carried out systematically for the purpose pursued" (Motta & Bresser-Pereira, 1988, p. 29).

What assures formality, giving bureaucracy legitimacy, is rationality: its logical, coherent way of organizing work by virtue of its intended ends. It is not enough that this rationality is initially perceived only. It needs to be registered and standardized, to have a legal system that allows the one who holds power within the bureaucracy to exercise it and even to coerce members to submit to existing norms. Finally, the bureaucracy formalizes - rationally and legally - a system of authority with well-defined hierarchical positions, assuming a pyramidal shape.

From this perspective, it is understood that the functioning of schools is the product of a mode of organization that is intended to be rational, thought or conceived logically in view of the needs imposed by the educational task. In the researched schools, this rational organization is legally supported by three legal documents that together organize work conceptions, ways of realizing it and ways of distributing roles: the political-pedagogical project, the curriculum proposal and the school regiment, respectively.

Associating bureaucratic rationality with the way in which the tradition of school culture was constituted, it is observed that it had its roots in the historical experience of modernity, when the mass school emerged associated with the state and liberal-democratic societies, with industrialization, with capitalism and rational thinking, configuring it, so that its purpose would be achieved with economy of efforts, resources and a centralized and authoritarian decision-making process. By analyzing the data collected, together with the pedagogical coordinators, we observe that their work is structured similarly to the tradition of bureaucratic organizations:

The school is extremely organized. The routines are unbreakable. On the first day of school the principal already explains how the routines and rules of the school are. I spent most of my time overseeing the routines (at the director's 'request'). It is a ritual: leave your backpack, queue, sing the hymn, pray, news communication, classroom, snack, playground, water, toilets, queue, classroom, orderly exit. As the students call it: the barracks. Differentiated activities are not welcomed by management because of the turmoil that some cause (CP3, emphasis added).

Uniform conferences, time control, organization of entry and exit movements, prayers, civic tasks such as singing hymns and the constant maintenance of order, were pointed out by those surveyed as characteristic of the routine intended to maintain the organization and placed under their responsibility.

The constructed organization corresponds to the rationality proposed for the pedagogical work and, over the years, it has been configured as a tradition: "This pedagogical organization is a modality, among others possible, that has historically prevailed" (Canário, 1996, p. 15) and that, by being formalized through pedagogical proposals, curriculum matrices and regiments, imposes itself as a bureaucratic domain over the pedagogical coordinators.

Legality has also been found in school organization through the adoption of records and other forms of registration adopted to justify the use of power within the school, as well as to frequently reiterate (rational) norms that guide the relationships and work of all:

Lots of bureaucratization! Many minutes were made in order to 'resolve' cases of indiscipline [...]. There were briefcases, called occurrence records, which reported the facts that occurred in the classroom: conversations, cell phone use, tasks not done, thefts, physical and/or verbal aggressions etc. Teachers wasted a lot of class time making these records unnecessarily, as it had been previously agreed that these cases should be referred to the pedagogues. But the fact of 'sporting' such a briefcase gave the teacher a 'sense of power', as some could not teach without their presence [...] (CP2, emphasis in the original).

Along with rationality and legality, hierarchy also constitutes the formalization of bureaucratic organizations - which was confirmed by the interviewees: "I have witnessed several times the centralization of actions and decisions in the hands of the director(s)" (CP10) "The director is a person who centralizes decisions, does not accept the opinion of others" (CP4).

'Impersonality' is the second element that legitimizes the power exercised by the bureaucracy and is based on the idea that the subjects only play their role, acting strictly from the norms and rules that, being rational and legal, are for all indistinctly: "Bureaucratic administration is performed without regard to persons. [...] People's government exists only to the extent that they occupy positions. [...] And if the authority is impersonal, the obedience rendered by the subordinate is likewise [...]" (Motta & Bresser-Pereira, 1988, p. 32).

In the research, the belief in the mastery of bureaucracy through impersonality was quite present when teachers consider that the observance of norms must be essentially due to the fact that they exist for everyone and, therefore, it is up to those involved to adapt to them:

Regarding the management of indiscipline in the classroom, teachers consider that it is the student's duty to commit to the study so that the teacher's practice occurs smoothly.

[...] as a rule, [...] teachers talked to parents so that they could 'settle' their child's life at school. The school 'believes' that parents have to do this 'duty' on their own (CP2, emphasis in the original).

Likewise, when the class is structured as a rational and impersonal process, there is an impersonal bureaucracy in front of which it is incumbent upon students to adapt indistinctly: "Lessons that do not take into account the student's reality are common in this context [...]" (CP2).

When adopted, the bureaucratic logic of impersonality eventually justifies liberal postures. Not by chance, the bureaucratic model was widely adopted within the capitalist project.

'Professional administration' is the third element that legitimizes the power of bureaucratic organizations, run by qualified professionals and/or masters of the routines, rules and procedures of the administered thing. Your job is to dedicate yourself fully to them on behalf of the one you represent: the state. This position leads the bureaucracy manager to develop an emotional identification with the organization and its objectives, as some of the statements reveal:

The principal has an essential role within the school, but for this to happen it is necessary to always be present, always be at school, following the actions performed, a fact that students and teachers perceive. It is the director who reviews the guidelines from the Center and also the general rules of the institution (CP4).

Management itself was understood as the principal's task of conducting the school at its administrative level. He never referred to pedagogues or teachers to report on projects he implemented or daily decisions (CP2).

The speeches of the respondents reveal clear recognition of the figure of the school principal/administrator as an agent whose role in itself is already legitimizing the power of bureaucratic organization. Its power is recognized as emanating from the office and there is even the expectation of the school community for it to be so.

The research showed, then, that the rationality of the school organization presents itself to the school community in an extremely logical way, which legitimizes the power of the bureaucracy and allows it to control its functioning. Importantly, the source of power in bureaucracy is the logic of its rationality and not tradition, which does not prevent the bureaucratic rationality, once instituted and fully disseminated, from becoming itself a tradition in the sense used in this research. If this occurs, the performance procedures are perceived by the members as rituals, as a cultural tradition.

By intensifying and becoming a tradition, bureaucracy runs the risk of not being understood by the people it organizes, who can do it or repeat it without mastery of the rationality that sustains it. This phenomenon, which makes bureaucracy inconsistent with its constant efficiency purpose, is called dysfunction: "The predicted behavior was rational, precise, coordinated. The behavior that actually occurs, and that is no longer foreseen, may turn out to be exactly the opposite of the one planned" (Motta &

Bresser-Pereira, 1988, p. 58). According to the authors, dysfunctions originate essentially from three sources: excessive bureaucracy, resistance to acceptance, and informal behavior.

The data collected from the school's pedagogical coordinators allowed us to identify innumerable dysfunctions in relation to school administration and its organization, such as the lack of impersonality and the attribution of privileges, the disrespect of institutional norms and the low efficiency, the minimum behavior that is not enough to classify it as breaking norms, teacher absenteeism and informalities, social phenomena characterized by resistance to bureaucracy and depersonalization:

The principal protected the repetitive absences of teachers because they were her friends and did not accept any comment about this. The director centralizes all decisions and executes those that favor her (CP4).

In the class council the teachers were reminded of the date for the delivery of the notes on the desk, which were already on schedule, and some simply said they would not deliver on the date because they were not obliged (CP11).

Unjustified absences and constant delays from senior teachers at school were some of the events in which we needed to be resolved or 'administered' in some way. We never knew which teacher would be missing and why. Attestations or justifications for absences were only required of the 'new in the house', the others were a confidential matter (CP2, emphasis in the original).

From day one in school I was aware that what I was doing had nothing to do with what it was meant to be done. Of course I disagreed with a lot of things, almost everything, but I said nothing, could not speak. I came back home crying three months in a row. I was useless there (CP3).

I knew this was how things went, but what I didn't know was that the instituted movement was so strong that no one seemed ashamed to be part of it (CP2).

I often felt undervalued, often not being heard or ignored by some. I did my job as I thought I should. I did what I was supposed to do, but there were some aspects that I felt helpless to see certain practices, such as totally uninteresting classes, trying to give the teacher ideas and realizing that it was in vain. However, I didn't friction with anyone over this. It was a kind of agreement that I made to balance what I believed was right and what was already in place at school (CP5).

The dataset points out that, more than democratic organizations, schools function as bureaucratic organizations. Impersonality collides head-on with the recognition of school community members as subjects. The established rationality for teaching and learning and the routines are based on the logic of the modern school, even though its access has already been democratized and cultural, technological changes and changes in the working world modified the contemporary world.

The organization of the researched schools presents dysfunctions that may correspond to the resistance or attempt to overcome an organization lacking another rationality of work. Regarding the pedagogical coordination of these organizations, we infer that the most evident work is the coordination of the inconsistencies of the existing bureaucracy, and the political-democratic coordination of the collective human effort has not yet been fully revealed. However, as we say, people are subjects, beings endowed with values and purposes, capable, precisely for this reason, of establishing movements and advancing them.

School organization and culture of pedagogical coordination

In his work, the teacher is the main interlocutor of the pedagogical coordinator and it is important that this practice is done in a democratic and collective perspective. According to Medina (1997, p. 32), the supervisor (pedagogical coordinator) is

[...] political-pedagogical partner of the teacher who contributes to integrate and disintegrate, organize and disorganize the teacher's thinking in a movement of continued participation, in which different knowledges confront one another. The syntheses gathered in the confrontations are references that support the teacher's action as a class conductor. This problematization implies the action that integrates the teacher and the supervisor with the community in which the school is inserted.

It is unfeasible (if not impossible) and dehumanizing (in the sense of curtailing autonomy) that coordination intends to impose on the teacher the objectives and methods of his work, a scenario that leads him to the condition of mediating pedagogical practice, the relationship between teacher and the whole of his work context.

Educational practice develops essentially in the classroom, but is not restricted to it. In addition to the external contexts of the policies and guidelines emanating from the system there is also the "[...]

architectural ensemble of the school, the material and technological aspects, the symbolic systems, the teacher's skills, the students and the organizational and power components. [...] (Sacristán, 2000, p. 91) that configure a larger institutional context. Franco (2012, p. 31) calls this structure a pedagogical space and in it refers to the performance of the pedagogical team, which would have the task of [...] working with the collective of teachers and helping them in the construction/evaluation/reconstruction of their teaching practices [...] organizing the institution in the same direction of meaning. According the author, the pedagogical coordinator is that educator who is responsible to

[...] in the exercise of their function, produce the critical articulation between teachers and their context; between educational theory and educational practice; between being and educative doing, in a process that is at the same time formative and emancipating, critical and committed (Franco, 2008, p. 120).

However, when looking at the culture of pedagogical coordination work, it is observed that its tradition is not that of the dialogic, problematic and formative-reflective partnership of the teacher with a view to the articulation of teaching practice with the pedagogical project of the school, although the task of organizing the school and accompanying teachers have been since the beginning considered as attributions of this professional.

In this respect it is observed that in the 1930s Lourenço Filho (1972) already established as attributions related to the process of coordination or internal management of the school the administration of students (knowledge of their individual differences for their organization in classes; control of their attendance, punctuality and accomplishment of the school tasks and analysis of the special didactic procedures to attend to the individual differences), the administration of the teachers (acting for the understanding between the teachers and the direction through the interpretation of the programs, the evaluation of the teaching performance and the continuing education of teachers) and the administration of the general services (observing the use, conservation and cleanliness of school facilities, providing and distributing the necessary teaching resources and control of the bookkeeping work), asserting that [...] none of these aspects, however simple as it seems, have no influence on all the functions of organizing and managing" (Lourenço Filho, 1972, p. 123).

In 1974, Nérici (1974) points out, in the midst of the technicist tendency brought by LDB 5692/71, functions for the school supervisor that were related to curriculum planning and resulting teaching plans; assistance and improvement of the faculty; monitoring of the teaching-learning process and assessment, recovery and school failure; conducting didactic demonstrations on methods and materials; promoting good interpersonal relationships between teachers, students and the community.

The decade of the 1980s is marked as a period of criticism and engendering of the progressive work of the pedagogue by overcoming the traditional and technical performance of teaching specialists. Pimenta (1998) problematizes the school organization facing the goal of becoming an instrument of emancipation of the popular classes and argues that the 'new' school will be built from the existing school, in a movement of overcoming in which the school organization offers the best and most suitable conditions for the teacher's work with the popular classes. Defending the 'collective social work of school professionals', the author highlights as dimensions of the action of the pedagogue the work with the content and the function that must fulfill with the new population access the school; with the assessment; with teaching methods and techniques and with the objectives of school education, all from the perspective of [...] unmasking the conditions of domination in order to transform the social structures [...] ordered to a society project" (Pimenta, 1998, p. 174)

The work of Rangel (2002) is located, along with Pimenta (1998), in the set of efforts established in the years for the reframing of the work of the coordination professional, which she called supervising action. Considering that the specific object of school supervision is the teaching-learning process, the author asserts that this process includes [...] curricula, programs, planning, assessment, teaching and recovery methods, on which coordination procedures are observed, with integrative purpose, and orientation, nucleated in the study, in the exchanges, in the meaning of praxis" (Rangel, 2002, p. 78). Moving away from the technicist perspective, the supervision of teaching planning, teaching methods, assessment, and recovery would be embodied by continuous reflection-action-reflection movements. Rangel (2002) also defends the supervision of the school pedagogical project and the supervision with research.

Pinto (2011) and Domingues (2014) address the issue in recent productions and defend the role of the school pedagogue as an articulator of the teachers' continuing education through the political-pedagogical

project and considering the school culture. Coordination of pedagogical work would involve coordination with teachers and students; the professional development of educators (in-service training of teachers, non-teaching professionals and undergraduate trainees) and the articulation of the school with the local community. The pedagogical coordination would generate, together with the teachers, a reflexive and autonomizing movement.

Taken together, the studies show a clear evolution of the work of the pedagogical coordinator that advances from a not necessarily restricted but technical and liberal conception in the proposal of Lourenço Filho (1972) (the author already considered, for example, the formation of teachers as a work of the supervisor), for an action strongly committed, both politically and socially, in the conception of Pimenta (1998). The work of Rangel (2002) broadens the debate significantly by including the political-pedagogical project in the fields of coverage and the need for research. Pinto (2011) and Domingues (2014) add and develop the issue by referencing the coordination process in the school's political-pedagogical project, which has important implications in terms of considering the school culture, the educational community involving staff as educators and, in particular, when configuring the coordination process as an action, established with the teacher as a constructor of his praxis through a movement of reflection on itself through continuous formation.

This recovery of the historical development of the pedagogical coordinator's work allows us to affirm that its tradition is to be made by the close relationship with the teacher and the classroom processes and in interrelation with the other dimensions of the pedagogical environment. In the research, we seek to know how the coordination work of the schools took place, the tasks assumed, the teachers' formation, the difficulties faced and the possibilities of overcoming them. To this end, the data collection instrument addressed a question specifically to this concern.

Asked about the activities they performed as pedagogical coordinators (pedagogues) in schools and urged to estimate the time that each one occupied in the whole work, we obtained 88 indications of answers.

(1) Routine control, organization, uniform control, entry process control, delays, break and class exit, combat to mobile phone use were indicated 12 times.

(2) Attending parents of students and (3) attending students were also mentioned 12 times each. Together these three groups of activities were considered by the coordinators to be what occupied most of the working days, occupying 50 to 75% of the time.

(4) 12 more indications refer to teacher replacement in absent situations as an activity that occupies about 2 to 3 days a week.

(5) The other activity with the highest incidence was dealing with teachers, with 11 indications, seven of which mentioned 'conversations' with teachers who were in activity-hours, three considered this work as 'pedagogical accompaniment' and only two indications dealt with of the question as training in the activity-hours and/or directed activity-hours.

(6) The most direct pedagogical approach can also be identified in planning follow-up activities, with three indications, two of which mentioned that this was done bimonthly and/or semi-annually.

(7) Pedagogical and parent meetings received three indications.

(8) Organization of teaching materials got three indications.

(9) Activities related to the evaluation process received two indications, two related to the class council, one to the analysis of evaluation instruments and one pointing to the preparation of simulations.

(10) Work associated with school bureaucracy records were indicated eight times, distributed as follows: two indications for guidance and analysis of call books; three indications for reporting and completing documentation for the Education Center, and three indications for completing attendance reports for students receiving the Bolsa Família benefit.

It was also identified the (11) accompaniment of the special students included, with two indications and the (12) elaboration of the political-pedagogical project, mentioned only once.

(13) Other activities were indicated in three situations.

It was observed that the functioning of the school organization imposes to the coordinators a series of demands that, as they happen, are justified more by the bureaucratization than by the rationality of the collective and democratic work, pointing out that the routine management (entrance, interval and leaving the classroom, wearing uniforms and inhibiting the use of cell phones, attendance and attendance, record keeping, filling in minutes) and interpersonal relationships (attendance to students with dysfunction in class processes, attendance to parents) are the most present tasks in the work of the coordinators.

Despite recognizing that most of the time is spent on counseling parents and ‘undisciplined’ and underperforming students, the ‘understanding that pedagogical work focuses on joint action with teachers’ in the teaching-learning process was expressed in most speeches, either to recognize the importance of getting this work started, or to illustrate situations where it already happens:

Pedagogical part: 5% of my time is for pedagogical work, being almost nothing of my time. It is well known that it should be the other way around; it should be 70% of the time for pedagogical work to help teachers, improvement of pedagogical actions, and development of projects to meet the necessary demands of students, among others. (CP11).

Talk to teachers about their practices and didactics (30 minutes) (CP6).

These are activities to be performed (routine management). However, I believe that the construction of better teaching strategies with the teacher should be prioritized (CP5).

If there is clarity about the pedagogical focus of the coordinator’s work, the need to confront the school’s difficulties is inferred. Continuing education based on the reflection on the meaning of educational work, aimed at the construction of understandings and pedagogical proposals for the democratization of learning seems to be the way, since it is understood to be the process with the greatest potential to support the teachers’ development and the realization of a democratic pedagogical proposal.

Continuing education is a process that aims to empower or develop teachers in their own workplace: the school. It is a “[...] process that seeks to systematically and continuously develop all the resources of the educator-man involved in school work, aiming at a competent pedagogical practice [...]” (Fusari & Rios, 1995, p. 42), which can be developed through courses, study groups, research projects, meetings to exchange experiences, discussions and other forms of study, in which problems faced by each teacher are coordinated with problems and actions of the school as a collective. The proposal of continuing education, and in service, arose from the need to support teachers in the reflection on their work, considering the uniqueness of it, the importance of being considered subjects in the construction of their professional knowledge, the relevance that training is linked to the concrete problems experienced by teachers in the teaching-learning process (and its underlying dimensions).

Continuing training carried out⁴ of school from the system proposals, grouping teachers from different schools and realities, is the mode of formation that has the most tradition, as confirmed by the respondents:

There are trainings prepared by the Department of Education that are ready to be applied. At the end of the training there needs to be written work sent to the Secretariat as ‘proof’ of what has been done. There is no way to change much of what has been already elaborated (CP4, emphasis in the original).

No training at school (CP2).

There are those made available by SEED, but I think it has very ‘weak’ content that does not work with the reality of each school. With its problems and real training needs (CP6, emphasis in the original).

There are pedagogical formations often developed for teachers. A script ready to be applied is received (it appears on the website day by day education). However, this script does not always cover the effective needs of schools. (CP10)

I believe there are better topics to be addressed, however, SEED organizes the topics and usually requests reports of what has been applied to teachers (CP11).

Only in the pedagogical weeks with pre-established SEED themes and teachers who are conducting PDE (CP9).

Several limitations are associated with training processes, such as the low amount of hours in relation to the amount of content that is intended to be discussed; general themes for teachers from different institutions; transposition of the content to the pedagogical practice in another time/space, causing difficulties for the teacher (who will be alone at that moment); training provided by professionals who often do not know the school practice (academics, researchers); proposing curriculum/methodological innovations that will require more elements from the teacher than those that can be addressed in the training course (Reale, Perdigão, Bueno, & Mello, 1995).

In addition to the difficulties felt by the coordinators for the pedagogical accompaniment and teacher training due to the strength of the routine on their doing, there are those that are the product of the policy and management established by the system for schools, weakening them and imposing barriers not easily transposable:

⁴ By ‘out of school’ we are not only considering the ‘out of school physical space’ factor, but essentially ‘out of school reality, purpose and needs’.

[...] controlled use of the internet that was often unavailable to teachers and made some plans that depended on it to use new technology tools in the classroom limited (CP9).

What I realized is that in school everything is a hindrance and if it is not, it becomes! You can never do anything: there is no material, no space, no transportation. What you don't have is goodwill. I had many ideas and suggestions, but I realized with the help and support of a few. They were isolated actions with the 'sympathetic teachers'. We had a fantastic Black Consciousness Seminar, but only with three teachers and two classes, because the others were not interested. It's hard not to be discouraged. It's just that speech we heard at the university: 'she's starting, poor thing!' I spent my own money to get stuff, I stayed overtime many times. The strike period and the return and replacements made the year very busy, so the strike was an excuse for a lot, including 'pretending to teach and students pretending to learn'. I got bored because I felt responsible for many failures, but it is not possible to change overnight. I'm sure this year will be better (CP3, emphasis in the original).

There are several situations, especially when it comes to professionals, because one of the biggest problems I had in school was the frequent lack of professionals, and others who took medical certificates and classes went to distribution, which took several weeks for the substitute to show up at school. This had a great impact on the issue of schedules and redistribution of professionals, leaving even for us of the pedagogical staff to be in the classroom applying content. These situations happened 'almost daily' (CP6, emphasis in the original).

Ongoing training within the school, by contrast, seeks to structure itself in such a way as to overcome such historical difficulties in teacher 'training'. The theory-practice articulation seeks to be rescued by the teachers' reflection movement about their pedagogical daily life, stimulating them to, rather than incorporating new discussions about already formulated theories, breaking with traditions and establishing themselves as producers of practical knowledge (coming from reflection on practical experience). In this context, the teaching work can be analyzed in the set of organizational dimensions that constitute it and in the set of dimensions that constitute the teacher himself as a subject. Research data lead us to recognize that although the culture of reflection is not a tradition within the institutions, many germs and related meanings can already be observed:

These were small but significant achievements. What I rate as the best was the directed activity-hour. It is a requirement of the NRE, but in our school it worked out and we went further. I set up a monthly schedule and left the subject to the choice of teachers. The methodology was different for each teacher. There are some who hate reading, I respect, although I consider as contradictory. With some I read and argued; talked to others from practice or planning. We were talking about students, but the purpose was to find solutions (CP3).

I caused the organization of a group of continuing education of educators; I built the class leader training project as a way to bring students to the discussion; I was closer to the teachers, listening to their anxieties and dialoguing to overcome difficulties (CP7).

I was able to get some teachers to change their view of students and the role of the school in their lives. By orienting them in relation to new practices, I was also able to guide several families and students who greatly improved during the year (CP6).

Located in the school, continuing education resignifies the work of the pedagogical coordinator and the school management itself, by acting in the perspective of partnership and cooperation, stimulating and supporting the teacher - establishing the indispensable dialogue - and reflecting on the coordination itself. Thus, it has the potential to ensure the articulation of collective and democratic work, through the reflection referenced to the political-pedagogical project, built by the school collective. It is a democratic formation because it is collaborative, cooperative, and collective.

Finally, ongoing education is justified by the assumption of teacher autonomy, the recognition of teachers as subjects of themselves and of school organization, as Barroso asserts:

Building autonomy as an organizational change requires its members to increase their knowledge of their modes of operation and the rules and structures that govern them. This organizational learning (of and by the organization) is a necessary instrument for the actors of an organization to know their own field of autonomy and the way it is structured, a condition for transforming 'individual autonomies' in 'collective autonomies' (Barroso, 1998, p. 30, emphasis in the original).

To the extent that the teacher is the subject of his own formation, articulating it from his or her work and in function of it, this character is formed and exercises autonomy and participation, essential aspects of the management process. This participatory exercise in the management of his or her formation, in turn, goes through the formation itself, which empowers him or her to decide, choose paths, build understandings. Managing his or her training allows him or her to learn participation. Formation, in turn, opens possibilities

for enabling democratic participation in management. In other words, they are axes of extreme connection, because it is the formation itself that gives conditions for teachers to know and exercise participation in the democratic management process, while such a management process is fundamental for reflective formation of teachers to be configured as teacher training in collectivity, seeking to articulate in face of the difficulties existing today in school organizations. Therefore, management and continuing education are understood as articulated practices of the school organization.

Concluding remarks

The interest of this research turned to the knowledge of the pedagogical coordination process from the perspective of how it is constituted within the schools and aimed to: point out notions about the cultural dynamics (form of constitution, tradition and disruption) associating them with professional culture of the coordinators; know the characteristics of the work carried out by educators within public schools; and contribute to the professional reflection processes of pedagogues who work in school management.

In dealing with culture, we rely on Williams (1979) to argue that it has a material nature, being the product of man's concrete experience in the world, the way subjects experience and feel the reality presented to them in the form of a range of traditions (current hegemonies). Just as there are subjects who, in the face of traditions, reveal postures of greater assimilation and less questioning, there are those who develop other meanings, problematizing the traditions instituted by the creation of alternative hegemonies. This instituting movement unleashes dynamics within institutions both to react against changes that seek to impose themselves, and also to positively and qualitatively alter the established reality in the face of issues with which their values and conceptions do not fit. According to Williams (1979), the development of alternative hegemonies is not done individually, but collectively from the articulation of those subjects who feel material experience in the same way, who group themselves into formations (or movements).

When we look at school organizations from the research data, we find forms of organization that has proved to be, rather than portraying a collective effort to rationalize work in the face of educational purposes, a product of bureaucratic organization logic. This bureaucracy, in turn, was not "haphazard", but was produced in the set of historical experiences produced by humanity in relation to how to educate their young people; the form assumed by the bureaucracy, although at a given moment representing a logical and rational choice, was also and still is a cultural product that today is presented within schools as a tradition.

Many beliefs, meanings and significances have been revealed through research in relation to the school, the function it fulfills, the difficulties it faces and the pedagogical coordination work itself.

Regarding the way they are managed, we want to believe that democracy is not a value, as is autonomy and participation. The data suggest that school management processes are based on the idea that managing is conducting in the sense of deciding, imposing rules and ensuring the maintenance of hierarchy and that conducting also impacts the work of coordinators. Within the institutions there is a shared feeling of fear, translated by the belief that the most viable behavior is non-confrontational, as well as silencing, 'not using' the word.

Regarding the way in which they function or organize themselves, we find an appreciation of the organization expressed through rituals of entrance, interval, recreation, showing that the intention of submission of the bodies still supports certain traditions. Belief in the importance of organization clashes with the absence of democracy, which generates great contradiction in the functioning, because they come to believe in an imposed organization and not in a consciously built, for and by autonomy. This contradiction causes bureaucratic rationality to collapse and, in view of this dysfunction, reorganization processes have been slow. Feelings of inefficiency, discouragement, low self-esteem, disinvestment, and isolation can certainly be associated with disorganization and low achievement resulting from the conflict between organization as a value and the informally adopted assumptions and rituals of organization.

By intending to know the characteristics of the work performed by the pedagogues within the schools, we observe the school organization exerts a force with bureaucratized nuances on the work of these professionals, moving them away from the collective articulation to the political-pedagogical project of the school. Although they invest much of the time involved in managing students and their relationships with families, the coordinators have the clarity of the pedagogical character that would be important to impress on their work, revealing the conflict that permeates the exercise of the function.

Therefore, to contribute to the processes of professional reflection of pedagogues that work in school management, we point to the reflective continuing formation of the school collective as a possible alternative to the contradictions that present themselves. However, the external formation proposed by the system based on its demands prevails, to the detriment of training centered on space and institutional reality.

Difficulties arising from the political organization of the education system also push the coordinators away from the pedagogical core; the material and organizational conditions afforded to schools have a decisive weight in this matter.

However, despite the established school reality, there are movements started around the continuous and reflective formation, focused on the advancement of the pedagogical practice of schools. The school resists and remakes itself.

The strength of what is instituted was strongly imposed among the young pedagogical coordinators investigated, who, at times, adapted to enjoy adequate, viable and economical ways of doing the work, also as a condition of survival. In others, it created possibilities of overcoming. Among them, there is a clear understanding of the contradictory elements of the instituted school organization and, at the same time, the visualization of possibilities of positive reconfiguration of such elements.

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INFORMATIONS ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Beatriz Gomes Nadal: has a PhD in Education and Curriculum at PUC-SP. Adjunct Professor, Department of Pedagogy, Ponta Grossa State University. Director of UEPG Publishing. Editor of the *Olhar de Professor* magazine between 2004 and 2018. Coordinator of the Specialization Course in Educational Management: School Organization and Pedagogical Work. Researcher in the areas of educational policy and management, school culture and organization, and teacher education.

ORCID: 0000-0002-7016-5527

Email: beatrizgnadal@gmail.com

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